

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

desire to come to terms, the Pope gravely answered that, when their lord had restored her cities to the Holy See and repented of his crimes, he would receive him back into the bosom of the Church.¹ His intention was to crush this chief despot first, and then send all Christendom forth to recover the Holy Pkces. But the realization of the scheme was impossible. Wars raged everywhere. France was at war with England, the Emperor on the point of hostilities with the King of Hungary, who in his turn was assailing the Venetians. Italy clung to her state of anarchy. Siena fought Perugia for the possession of Cortona and Monte-pulciano ; Florence, with mercenaries under Galeotto Malatesta, made war on Pisa with mercenaries under Sir John Hawkwood. A general league against Bernabo effected little, and, in 1364, a peace was signed at Milan by which Bologna was left in the hands of the Church, but the Pope weakly consented to remove Albornoz to the southern legation.

Each peace, whether in France or in Italy, set loose fresh hordes of mercenaries, who moved over the lands almost unchecked^ so admirably organized as to deserve the description that Gregorovius gives them, of " errant military states." In vain did Urban publish bull after bull, hurling anathemas at the companies and their leaders. The condottieri mocked at Rome's thunders. In the latter part of 1365, Duguesclin, on his way to Spain, besieged the Pope himself in Avignon, compelling him to pay an enormous ransom, and to absolve him and his followers from all censures.

It was, perhaps, this humiliation that induced Urban to carry out his old resolution of returning to Rome, to which the Romans had invited him at the beginning of his pontificate. The exhortations of the royal Spanish Franciscan, Peter of Aragon, who came to Avignon full of an impassioned dream of the reformation of the Church, no less than the eloquent appeal of Petrarca, made a deep impression on the Pope. The Emperor was favourable, and Albornoz urged him to make no delay. In

¹ M. Villani, **xi.** 31, 32. *Cf. Dtario d* dnonimo Florentine* (edited by Gherardi), p. 296.